

# THE MASSACHUSETTS TEACHER.

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By THE BOSTON EDITORS.

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## INTELLECTUAL ARITHMETIC.

ABOUT the year 1821, Warren Colburn published his little work entitled *Intellectual Arithmetic*. It was indeed a small book in point of bulk, but the matter which it contained was of very great moment, and has contributed more to the progress of exact science in this country, than any single work within the knowledge of the writer of this communication; and an eminent teacher has said that it was the only perfect scientific book he had ever seen. In this work the author carried out the plan which had been sketched and partially put in practice by Pestalozzi in Switzerland, and of which the reader will find a pretty good account in "Biber's Memoirs on Pestalozzi and his Plan of Education."

Prior to the publication of Colburn's treatise, Arithmetic had been taught almost wholly by means of rules, the reasons for which were nearly as much a mystery to the learner, as the mode of calculating an eclipse of the sun was to the natives of America, when Columbus first landed on its shores.

Common fractions were esteemed especially unintelligible and refractory; and in a highly popular treatise it was gravely said, that vulgar fractions were so difficult to understand, that it was hardly worth the while to trouble the learner with them, especially as every operation involving fractions could be so easily performed by means of decimals. To the extreme difficulty in question, it is to be hoped that no teacher in Massachusetts would at the present time assent. The fact is, that vulgar fractions, when the learner fully understands the nature and significance of them, are as easily managed as any other numbers. Under the old system of Arithmetic, it was thought premature for a lad to commence the subject until he had reached the age of twelve or fourteen years. And with good reason, perhaps, considering the discouragements under which he would be obliged to labor;

for it requires considerable tact and no small degree of patience, to apply a rule and carry out its details, when the learner can see no reason for what he is doing. But after the intellectual system was introduced, it was found, not only that children from six to eight years old could make rapid progress in numbers, but also that the study was one of the most interesting that could occupy the child's mind.

Intellectual Arithmetic continued to grow in favor, and became one of the most prominent parts of common education. Many people, educated after the old fashion, still retained their prejudices, but when they witnessed the exercises, they were utterly astonished at the mathematical power acquired by quite young children. It is said that when the School Committee of Boston heard the performances of the pupils in the Grammar Schools, their astonishment was so great, that they doubted whether the whole were not an exploit of mere memory, whether the scholars had not been so thoroughly drilled on the identical questions performed in presence of the examiners, that they remembered the steps and the result of each individual problem; and their doubt was removed only by one gentleman's making a new series of questions, and finding that the children solved them with the same facility with which they could solve those in the text-book.

But of late, in some places, this study seems to have been put in abeyance; for what reason, the writer of this article is unable to say, unless it be to save labor on the part of the teacher. This neglect, wherever it occurs, is especially to be deplored. There is, indeed, no royal road to Arithmetic, but there is a road, which, persevered in, will undeviatingly lead the patient learner to a clear and precise knowledge of its principles, and give him a certainty, rapidity, and facility, which will serve admirably the purposes of business life, and lay the surest foundation for the entire superstructure of pure mathematics.

But as there may be some who doubt the use of the department of study under consideration, let us enter a little into detail. Every mathematician knows that analysis, when practicable, is the only proper mode of forming rules. Now the analytical or rather inductive processes of Intellectual Arithmetic not only lead the mind directly and naturally to the rule, but, in a great many cases, supersede the necessity, if not the utility, of the rule itself.

For the sake of illustration, let us take a question in proportion. Two men build 10 rods of wall in a certain time; how many rods will 30 men build in the same time? By proportions we have  $2 : 30 :: 10 :$  the answer; and  $\frac{30 \times 10}{2} = 30 \times 5 = 150$  rods, the answer. The statement and the solution result from

a rule, the reasons for which, in very numerous instances, have never entered the student's mind, and he is often ignorant of the fact that reasons can be given. To solve the same question by analysis: If 2 men build 10 rods, one man will build half as much, or 5 rods, in the same time, and 30 men will build 30 times as much as one man, that is, 150 rods. Again, let us take a question in the Rule of Three Indirect, as it is called. If 4 men can do a piece of work in 10 days, how long will it take 5 men to do the same? Without making any statement in proportions, the skilful arithmetician would say, It will take 5 men four-fifths as many, or 8 days; and the well-instructed learner would say, If 4 men can do it in 10 days, one man can do it in 40 days, and 5 men can do it in one-fifth as many, or 8 days. As a third example, let us take a question in the "Double Rule of Three." If 10 men make 4 rods of fence in 5 days, how long will 50 men require to make 30 rods? Solution: It will take 50 men one-fifth as long, or one day, to make 4 rods, one-fourth of a day to make one rod, and thirty-fourths or  $7\frac{1}{2}$  days, to make 30 rods.

These examples show that proportions, however useful they may be found in Geometry and some other departments of Mathematics, are by no means necessary in Arithmetic. It is very true, that rules might be drawn from such examples as have been given above, and, if the rules of proportion are ever used, that is the very thing that should be done; for without such an induction, the reasons for the rules are very rarely comprehended. Many other parts of Arithmetic might be taken to show that the whole subject rests upon very simple processes, which almost any child can understand; but I forbear.

What, then, is the inference to be drawn with regard to teaching Arithmetic? Evidently this; that the learner should be exercised upon a well contrived and judiciously arranged series of questions in Intellectual Arithmetic, until he understands and can rapidly perform all kinds of operations pertaining to the subject; after which he may be put into Written Arithmetic, with this special proviso, that when he meets with any serious difficulty in the reasoning, he should be immediately carried back, and be required to perform the same processes of reasoning on small numbers; and when he has made himself master of the several steps, he may then resume the question which had occasioned the difficulty.

Some teachers adopt the practice, with the more advanced scholars, of assigning set times for exercises in the intellectual department, as a half a day or an hour each week. This practice will effect much, but I would by no means neglect that previously mentioned, of carrying the learner back to first principles. Indeed, Arithmetic is most rapidly learned by learning

slowly in one sense, that is, by thoroughly learning each step before advancing to the next. In this respect it much resembles music. A gentleman in Europe, by the injunctions of his teacher, practised three years on preparatory lessons only; never having played a tune, he was much surprised to find that he could play at sight any of the popular operas. So in Arithmetic, long-continued and thorough drilling in the simplest elements will certainly insure power and facility in the sequel. s.

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### A METHOD OF TEACHING SPELLING.

THE following method of teaching spelling has been practised with good success in one of the grammar schools of Boston:

A convenient number of words, say twenty-five, from the spelling-book or the reading lesson, is assigned as a lesson for study, the definitions as well as the orthography being required. The lesson is then prepared, and each member of the class is provided with a slate and pencil, or a slip of paper and pen and ink. The words are then dictated by the teacher, and all the members of the class write them simultaneously. When all the words have been written, each scholar exchanges his list with his neighbor, one of the scholars is called upon to spell the first word *as written* on his list, and the correct orthography of the word is settled. If on any list it is found to be incorrectly spelled, the holder of the list checks it. The definition is then given. The whole number of words on the list is gone through with in this way. The lists are then returned to their owners, who are required to make the proper corrections where the words are checked. If the teacher deems it necessary, he may then require the lists to be brought up for inspection, or he may pass around for that purpose. If, at the close of the exercise, suitable criticisms and remarks of approbation or censure are made, the class may be stimulated to exercise great care and diligence, to excel in this very important, but much neglected branch of elementary education.

At the first glance at the subject, the process described may appear to be a very slow and tedious one; but when it is considered that *each pupil* must spell and write *every word*, and then have his attention called to the orthography of every word a second time, and even the third time if he has committed an error, it will be seen that it is an expeditious and economical method.

*The method of spelling by writing upon the blackboard*, which we give below, is taken from the excellent Report of Mr. Jones, Commissioner of Schools for Rockingham County, N. H.

The class, if not very large, are all sent to the board at one



time. The teacher pronounces the word; the class simultaneously write it, repeat each letter, and pronounce the word; as soon as the class have written, read, and pronounced the word, and the teacher has glanced his eye over the writing for the purpose of detecting any mistake that may have been made, another word is given to the class.

Several important advantages are gained from this method of conducting the exercise of spelling. Pupils rapidly acquire the mastery of language. Many will spell *orally*, who fail in *writing* their words. It is reasonable to suppose that by bestowing more attention upon a word, as in writing, a scholar will better understand and longer remember that word which he spells. This exercise much improves the *penmanship* of the class.

Experience has proved this point. After a short period of drilling, the class will not only write their words much more elegantly, but more rapidly; and when they take hold of the pen, they are inclined to do proportionably better with that.

The teacher can easily make all the necessary corrections. A glance of the eye over the board, in addition to hearing every word read, and pronounced after it has been written, will detect any errors that may have occurred. The labor of correcting the spelling exercises of fifty scholars, who have written upon slates, is no small task, and will so break in upon the regular order of business, as to render the exercise of spelling too infrequent for great improvement. The last though not least advantage that we will name, is its efficiency in stimulating the class to diligent study; awakening an interest in the class exercises; and rendering the study itself welcome to the older pupils.

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#### THE SCHOOLMASTER.

A GOOD schoolmaster minces his precepts for children to swallow, hanging clogs on the nimbleness of his own soul, that his scholars may go along with him.

There is scarce any profession in the Commonwealth more necessary, which is so slightly performed, as that of a schoolmaster. The reasons whereof I conceive to be these. First, young scholars make this calling their refuge; yea, perchance before they have taken any degree in the University, commence schoolmasters in the country, as if nothing else were required to set up this profession, but only a rod and ferule. Secondly, others who are able, use it only as a passage to better preferment, to patch the rents in their present fortune till they can provide a new one, and betake themselves to some more gainful calling. Thirdly, they are disheartened from doing their best with the miserable reward which, in some places, they receive, being masters to the children, and slaves to their parents.—*Fuller*.

[For the Massachusetts Teacher.]

THE Anniversary Exercises of the State Normal School, at New Britain, Connecticut, closed on Wednesday, October 1st. The annual sermon was delivered on Sunday evening, at the South Church, by Rev. T. D. P. Stone. At 2 o'clock P. M., on Monday, the State Teachers' Association held its annual meeting.

A lecture was delivered by the President, Hon. Henry Barnard, on the "Life, Character, and Educational Services of Rev. Thomas H. Gallaudet."

In the evening a lecture before the Association, by Collins Stone, Professor in American Asylum for Deaf and Dumb, on "Adaptation in Teaching." On Tuesday the Annual Examination of the Normal School took place.

On Tuesday evening, an address by Rev. S. Turnbull of Hartford, and a poem by Rev. S. D. Phelps, of New Haven, were delivered before the Gallaudet and Barnard Societies.

Wednesday forenoon was devoted to the public examination of the Graduating Class. As this was the first class of graduates in this Institution, much interest was taken in the exercises, and a large number of visitors were present.


Wednesday afternoon was occupied in delivery of orations and reading of essays by the graduates, and in dissertations and compositions by members of other classes.

Diplomas were awarded to five members of the Senior Class. At the close of the exercises, a beautiful Bible was presented to each of the instructors of the school, by the pupils.

The presentation was made by Mr. L. L. Camp, one of the graduates, and the gift accepted by Mr. Stone for the teachers.

The exercises all passed off very pleasantly. More than a thousand persons were seated in the Public Hall of the Normal building on Wednesday Afternoon.

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 Prof. Olmsted of New Haven has discovered that one pound of rosin and three pounds of lard, when stirred together, become semi-fluid at 72 degrees Fahrenheit. The mass melts at 90 degrees, and will remain transparent and limpid at that temperature. For lard lamps, the lard is rendered more fluid by the rosin, and its power of illumination is increased two-fifths. It is a singular fact that although the mixture melts at 90 degrees, the rosin alone requires 300 degrees to melt it, and the lard 97 degrees.

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He that makes any thing his chiefest good wherein virtue, reason and humanity do not bear a part, can never do the offices of friendship, justice, or liberality.—*Cicero*.

## THE MIND SUSCEPTIBLE OF CULTIVATION.

A WELL-DRESSED and cultivated garden is a source of pleasure, as well as profit to its owner. With its luxuriance of vegetation, its beauty of blossom and wealth of fruit, it presents a delightful picture to the eye of taste.

The skilful gardener never remits his exertions to keep the vines trellised, the flowers supported against the too strong breath of the wind, the loaded fruit trees carefully propped, and all the different forms of vegetation which he cultivates, so situated as to meet their own peculiarities. One plant he places in a dry soil, another in wet ground; one as its nature requires, in the shade, another in the full, open sunshine. Every rare bud is watched for its blossoming, every exotic is nurtured with care. Every dry branch is trimmed out of the young tree, and every limb that would mar its graceful symmetry is early pruned. The marks of taste, of watchful care, and of unremitting labor, everywhere appear throughout the garden. By daily watchfulness and labor, its symmetry, richness and refreshing beauty are preserved. But there is a sight more attractive than a well-dressed garden. It is a cultivated mind—a mind disciplined by study, with its intellectual and moral powers symmetrically developed, and with its faculties ever wakeful for the acquisition of knowledge, and for the appreciation of truth in nature, in life, in science. There is a labor more important and more arduous than that of the gardener. It is the work of the teacher,—of *the cultivator of the mind*. The office of instructor is as much nobler as mind is nobler than matter; as much nobler as the immortal nature of man is more excellent than the perishable flowers of the earth.

The gardener is encouraged in *his* labors by the fact that *vegetation is susceptible of important improvements by cultivation*. The cabbage, in its wild state, is a slender, insignificant herb, with no appearance of a head. The potato, in its native wilds of tropical America, is a rank, running vine, with scarcely a tuber at its roots. All the rich varieties of the apple have been developed, by careful culture, from the sour crab of Siberia. The numerous and splendid varieties of the dahlia, which adorn the yards and gardens of the tasteful, are the descendants of a coarse Mexican plant, with an ordinary yellow flower, with a single circle of colored leaves. The tulip and the genarium afford similar examples of the transforming and improving influence of cultivation. This great law of the vegetable kingdom, that important improvements may be produced in the flowers and fruits by the hand of cultivation, has stimulated the gardener and the agriculturist to diligent and watchful efforts to

develop, by culture, new and more choice species of fruits and flowers. Thus gardens, orchards, and indeed whole agricultural districts are transformed by human skill and industry from the wildness of nature to the beauty of the fruitful fields.

But the susceptibility of improvement by culture is not confined to the plants and fruits of the earth. The same law exists in the mental world. *The mind may be improved by cultivation.* It is an *obvious* fact; and like most common truths, its importance has made it common and obvious.

This great fact should be ever present with the teacher; for, common as is the idea that the mind may be cultivated, it is to us teachers one full of significance. All the duties of our office arise out of this fact. Were the mind *incapable* of acquiring knowledge, of receiving discipline, of experiencing development, "our occupation would be gone," and our office would have no existence. It is because the mind can be improved by culture, can acquire knowledge, can be strengthened by exercise, can be disciplined and developed by skilful training, that our office assumes a high importance.

It is, teachers, because our pupils can be improved by education, can be made graceful in manners, amiable in disposition, happy in the acquisition of knowledge, and useful in its proper employment, that we have reason to toil on in the arduous duties of our profession with a strong courage and a joyful heart. It is because we are called to aid our pupils in acquiring knowledge, in developing their intellectual faculties, in cultivating their moral powers, and in forming their whole character, that we may justly regard our work as interesting in its nature, important in its influence, momentous in its consequences.

Teachers, let us ever keep before us this obvious but important principle, that the mind is susceptible of high culture, that our pupils, by accurate and sound instruction, by the application of right influences and the inculcation of correct principles, may be brought up to a high point of intellectual and moral excellence, of honor and refinement.

With what enthusiasm does the skilful horticulturist strive to improve the transplanted wild flowers! How assiduously does the faithful gardener, by a beautiful system of budding and grafting, labor to cultivate choice species of fruit. And shall we, teachers, with less enthusiasm or less assiduity toil to develop the minds and improve the character of our pupils? If we are in any proper measure qualified for the duties of our office, we have the power of influencing many minds; our moulding hand is shaping *character*, that which is more durable than the mountains and shall continue when the stars shall have withdrawn their shining.

Men *usually* exult at the thought that they have an influence



over others. But we, teachers, should tremble rather than exult at the contemplation of the influence which our position gives us over susceptible minds. How impressive to us ought to be this common and obvious truth, that the minds of our pupils are capable of culture, that their character may be moulded by us for the present and for another life. If we are faithful to our high trust, ours will be no worthless life—ours will be no contemptible honor. We shall not have lived in vain if minds under our care are developed with symmetrical beauty, their social and moral powers rightly cultivated, their passions and appetites brought into subjection to conscience, the sovereign faculty of the soul, and their nature moulded into conformity to the pure principles of Christianity. This done, and our pupils shall experience a higher development, a nobler culture in a better life; they shall flourish in immortal vigor and beauty on the banks of the River of Life which flows from beneath the throne of God.

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[Selected.]

### PERSEVERANCE.

A SWALLOW in the spring  
Came to our granary, and 'neath the eaves  
Essayed to make a nest, and there did bring  
Wet earth, and straw, and leaves.

Day after day she toiled  
With patient heart: but ere her work was crowned,  
Some sad mishap the tiny fabric spoiled,  
And dashed it to the ground.

She found the ruin wrought,  
But, not cast down, forth from the place she flew,  
And, with her mate, fresh earth and grasses brought,  
And built her nest anew.

But scarcely had she placed  
The last soft feather on its ample floor,  
When wicked hand, or chance, again laid waste,  
And wrought the ruin o'er.

But still her heart she kept,  
And toiled again; and last night, hearing calls,  
I looked, and lo! three little swallows slept  
Within the earth-made walls.

What truth is here, O man!  
Hath hope been smitten in its early dawn?  
Have clouds o'ercast thy purpose, trust, or plan?  
Have FAITH, and struggle on.

REPORT OF THE ANNUAL EXAMINATION OF THE BOSTON  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

WE have read this report with great interest. We are particularly pleased with the spirit of candor, moderation and kindness in which it is written. The writer of it, Rev. Hubbard Winslow, is evidently no mere amateur, speculative educationist. He has brought to his work the mature experience of a practical educator. A good, sensible report, is, therefore, just what might have been anticipated. This we have and more. In many respects, it is a model report.

In the first place, it is not unnecessarily voluminous. There has been, not only in Boston, but elsewhere, a tendency to swell these documents to a very formidable bulk. But because we have large schools, it does not follow that our reports should be cut to the same pattern.

In the second place it is not incumbered with that useless and meaningless routine of remarks on each individual school, which is found in most of the reports of the day.

Finally, it makes its appearance free from another worse than useless appendage, in the shape of a tabular representation of the results of the answers made by the scholars.

But we will not detain our readers with a more extended notice of this admirable document. We are happy to have it in our power to transfer the document to our pages, only omitting those portions which are of a local interest, that our readers may judge for themselves.

J. D. P.

“The long agitated question respecting the expediency of employing a Superintendent, having resulted in favor of making the trial, at least for one year, the Committee are happy to say, they have thus far had reason to believe that the Board has made a wise selection of the man for this office. So long as the office is filled by a discreet and efficient person, and is not allowed to relax the vigilance and efficiency of the Board, they believe it will disappoint the fears and confirm the hopes of the Committee respecting it.”

“The Committee are happy to report that they have found the Schools, generally, in an excellent condition. There is considerable difference between them; but it is not thought advisable to offend sentiments of delicacy on the one hand, nor to excite envy on the other, by indicating those which appear to be the best. The teachers of such schools have a richer reward in their own breasts than any thing we can say. Instead of singling out some of the Schools as particularly excellent, it is rather our privilege to report that *all* are doing *well*. The difference between them is probably more due to the ma-

terials of which they are composed than to the teachers. Still it is true in teaching, as in all other professions, that some have a greater aptitude for it than others. Persons of equal talent, learning, and moral worth, may have quite unequal measures of the peculiar talent to interest, control, and elevate the youthful mind. We must not, therefore, expect all our teachers to possess this rare talent in the highest degree. Having selected the best that can be obtained, and these doing the best in their power, what remains but to aid and encourage them?"

"They have regretted to find that in some departments there has been during the season no *Devotional Service*. These are departments in those Schools of which only the senior classes assemble in the morning with the masters. It may sometimes be a trial to female teachers to officiate as chaplains for fifty boys, but they can at least read from the Scriptures and offer the Lord's Prayer. Yet, in some instances, not even a Bible has been kept in the rooms. To this sacred Book these Schools owe their existence, and it is only by the influence of its benign principles that they can be sustained. It is earnestly recommended, that in all the rooms where the scholars do not assemble in the morning with the masters, the teachers be required to keep Bibles, and to open the sessions with a devotional exercise.

"In some instances, the *Spelling Book* has been laid aside too soon, and reliance placed solely on exercises from the Reading Lessons. Many of the difficult words in common use are so sparsely scattered over the pages of Reading Books, that the pupil may read several of them through without encountering all the words which he will have occasion to use, and will be likely to misspell. The surest way to secure an accurate orthography of the entire vocabulary of words, is to go patiently through and through the columns of a Spelling Book, in which all difficult representative words are scientifically arranged, spelling every word, until the whole is thus mastered. This is a work to be done by the younger pupils, and should be made an indispensable condition to promotion.

"Instances of *mispronunciation* also occurred, and on calling for a Dictionary, none was at hand. A fine edition of Webster's large work lay on the master's table in another story, but for all practical uses, where it was then wanted, it might as well have been in Texas. It is recommended that all the teachers be required to have dictionaries in their several rooms. It is also proposed that all the younger pupils be required to have Worcester's Primary Dictionary, and the more advanced pupils his Comprehensive Pronouncing and Explanatory Dictionary. These books are very cheap, and, for their price, are the most valuable school books in the English language.

"The *Reading* in the Schools is generally good, frequently excellent; but in some cases there is a want of distinctness and animation, while in others there is an approach to the artistic and theatrical style. The crowning beauty of reading, is a clear, firm, distinct articulation, with tones simple and natural. Young ladies, especially, who are not to be public speakers, but whose pure silvery tones and sweet cadences are to enliven and edify the social circle, as well as to soften and control the tempers of infancy and childhood, should equally avoid the shy, dull, mumbling manner, on the one hand, and the bold, boisterous, declamatory manner, on the other. Good reading is one of the most difficult and most desirable of all attainments. It involves a high cultivation of the vocal organs, richness and pathos of tone, a delicate sense of what is appropriate in expression and manner, with a heart ever alive to its subject. It greatly enhances the beauty and power of *conversation*, thus infusing grace and elegance in every social circle. It is, therefore, recommended that still more attention be paid to this important branch, especially to the higher developments of rhetorical beauty.

"Some of the Schools are deficient in *Parsing*. This seems to have arisen in part from their having used no other text book than Greene's *Analysis*. We are not insensible to the merits of this Grammar,—it ought to have a place in all the higher classes, but young children cannot easily enter far into the refinements of scholastic analysis. Both science and language are best taught by being first presented synthetically, until the leading principles are thoroughly learned. Minute analysis, as well as all speculations and theories, appropriately belong to the higher stages of mental development. For these reasons the Committee advise, that while the *Analysis* be retained, some other Grammar, on the established synthetic plan, be used in connection with it.

"Most of the Schools evince great readiness and accuracy in *Geography*, but in some instances failures have occurred, even on leading and important questions. These have probably resulted from an attempt to grasp too much. In the study of Geography, much time is often lost upon unimportant localities and names, and upon various other insignificant matters, whose only claim to notice is the fact that they occupy a place on the map or page. Most Geographies have by far too many details for profitable school use. Woodbridge's *Geography*, although very valuable for the reader or student, is faulty as a School Book in this particular. The Committee are gratified to find the studies of Geography and History united; and the readiness with which pupils have connected localities with their leading historical events, has generally afforded highly satisfactory evidence of the skill and diligence of their teachers.



"In the *Mathematical* department there is considerable difference in the progress of different Schools, some having advanced in Arithmetic only to the Roots, others having completed the whole of Arithmetic and nearly or quite the whole of Sherwin's Common School Algebra. A similar difference has been noticed in Penmanship. In several Schools it is very fine. In some of the Schools *Bookkeeping* has been taught with admirable success, while in others it has not been taken up. *Drawing*, likewise, has in some Schools been a favorite study, while in others it has received little or no attention. It is, perhaps, worthy of note, that the Schools which have accomplished most in the Mathematical Studies, are usually those which have also done most in the other last named branches. They are usually those in which each study is especially assigned to one or more teachers to whom it is a favorite. If the principle of division of labor applies even to the making of a pin, it is particularly applicable to the work of education, especially in its more advanced stages.

"The Committee have devoted but little time to examination in Philosophy, Astronomy, Physiology, &c., until they have been satisfied with the proficiency in the earlier studies. There is often a false ambition to press forward to advanced studies without due preparation. We realize little satisfaction in attending demonstrations respecting the laws of the heavenly bodies, by those who have not learned Spelling and Arithmetic; nor in listening to an elucidation of the principles of Hygiene, by those who cannot grammatically frame and parse the English language. By an undue multiplication of studies, School Committees have sometimes, in a measure, sacrificed that thoroughness and completeness in the elementary branches of education, for which these schools were established, and for which they have been so deservedly celebrated.

"The great point in education always is, or should be, not so much to make the mind acquainted with *individual facts*, however interesting or important, as to *discipline* it, by a course of severe consecutive studies, such as puts it in possession of elementary *principles*, and teaches it to apply them. After this mental discipline has been secured, and not before, many of the so-called higher studies are mastered with great rapidity and advantage. A student thoroughly taught in Mathematics, will obtain more valuable knowledge of Philosophy and Astronomy in one month, than he otherwise could in a lifetime. There is a beautiful order in education, which cannot be subverted but to infinite damage. Undertaking a study beyond the mind's legitimate reach, must naturally result either in a profitless superficiality, or a disgust for what the pupil is unable either to appreciate or understand. The Committee would not be under-

stood to disparage all such studies as the last mentioned in the Grammar Schools; they would only recommend that the masters be not advised, much less required, to press forward their pupils into them, to the neglect of the earlier, and, in their place, more important branches.

"There is a great difference between the Schools in respect to the *moral influence* exerted over them by the teachers. That which makes pre-eminently a good teacher of youth, is a power of moral influence over them, which commands their esteem and affection, controls their wills, inspires them with a noble ambition to excel in their studies, and forms in them the lofty and effective determination to grow in all the higher qualities of character. There is something beautiful, even sublime, in the power thus wielded by a teacher. It is not inferior, either in kind or degree, to that exerted by a good Christian pastor over a devoted people. It is, indeed, much the same thing. This quality in a teacher is deserving of far more consideration than it has usually received. That there is now a great improvement over former years in this particular, no one can question, who has spent only a few moments either in the Schools or in their halls and exterior apartments. The entire absence of every thing obscene or offensive, of every mark or defacement, upon all parts of the buildings, within and without, and the air of purity and neatness pervading the entire premises, conspire with the general appearance of the pupils in session, to impress us with the belief, that ~~however~~ children may conduct at home, they certainly do behave better at School than they once did. The Committee are gratified to find, that whilst our best masters, not essaying a wisdom superior to Solomon's, have none of that morbid sensibility which refuses to use the rod when it is necessary, they have yet that higher power of influence over their pupils which renders the necessity for it a rare occurrence.

"Nor should it be forgotten that parents also have a great responsibility. They ought to sympathize cordially with the teachers; to speak kindly and respectfully of them in their families; to inspire in their children sentiments of love and esteem for them; to consider the arduousness of their task, and do all in their power to relieve it. To do otherwise is suicidal. Those parents who take the part of the children against a faithful teacher, may soon find their children taking a fearful part against their parents."

"The Committee have observed that the best teachers usually succeeded in securing the most uniform *attendance* of their pupils. In some instances it has been remarkably good, in others, however, even the most faithful teachers have failed to realize the attendance which they have a right to expect.

The old saying, "that what costs nothing is not prized," has here its illustration. Some parents place so little value upon the Schools, as to allow every trifling cause to withhold from them their children. Now it is ascertained that the annual cost of Public School instruction in this City averages at least fifteen dollars per scholar. This does not include a vast amount of labor bestowed by persons whose time is more valuable than money. If all the expenses and services rendered were fully estimated, they would amount for each pupil, to nearer twenty than fifteen dollars per annum. If parents had actually to pay this sum annually from their earnings, for the instruction of each of their children, they would doubtless prize it more highly than they now do. But this is the least part of the cost. Pupils who are absent a portion of the time, retard the progress of their entire class, and eventually of the whole School to which they belong. They occasion vexation, derangement, delay. They thus not only waste the public treasure bestowed upon themselves, but that bestowed upon others. They also do injustice to the reputation of their teachers."

*Extract from the Report of the Sub-Committee of the English High School.*—"They have examined it wholly or in part, on several occasions in the months of June and July, and have been uniformly satisfied as to the ability and fidelity of the teachers, and the general excellence of the Institution. The course of study is extensive, embracing some of the higher branches taught in our Colleges. As the instruction here is designed to take the place of a collegiate course, for those whose plan of life makes them prefer to omit the Ancient Classics in favor of Modern Languages, and other studies directly practical, it is evident that the standard of admission should be high, and that none should be received without a thorough preparation. This is even more important here than at the Latin School; for those who enter the Latin School have in prospect some eight or nine years of study, while those who enter the High School have only three. And yet some of the most advanced studies of College—those of the Junior and Senior years—are pursued in this Institution. The requisite preparation has respect, however, rather to the *thoroughness* than to the *extent* of studies. The Regulations declare, 'It shall be the duty of the master to examine them (candidates) in Spelling, Reading, Writing, English Grammar, Modern Geography, and Arithmetic, of which a thorough knowledge shall be indispensable to admission.' Without this knowledge it is in vain that the candidate may have studied Astronomy, Philosophy, and Hygiene. All good practical teachers know, as no others can, the inestimable benefits of a severely accurate training as preparatory to each subsequent stage of education, and the evil of entering upon any study

prematurely. To acquire the mental habits of looseness and superficiality, and the consequent distaste for close and accurate study, is one of the greatest calamities that can befall the student. Unless every tendency to this is corrected, it will prove utterly fatal to success. The sooner and the more effectually it is corrected, the more substantial, and eventually the more rapid, will be the intellectual growth."

*Latin School.*—"The condition of this School has been so uniformly good for some years past, that little more has been required from the Quarterly Reports than the statement of this fact. At the last Quarterly Examination, all the classes were examined, and found to be in a highly satisfactory condition; but the attention of the Committee was directed more particularly to the first class, which has been for the last year under the immediate care of the principal master. Their thorough scholarship and gentlemanly deportment afforded such evidence of the excellent instruction and training which they had received, as to make the Committee feel most deeply the loss of the accomplished master of the School, Mr. Dixwell, who has for the last fifteen years filled the place so much to his own honor, and to the satisfaction and advantage of the City. The first class consisted of twenty-eight pupils, six of whom have passed through the school in four years—one year less than the usual course. At the Exhibition, the performances of the pupils were highly creditable to themselves and gratifying to an intelligent audience; and the previous impressions of the Committee in regard to the condition of the school were confirmed. After the distribution of the medals, his Honor the Mayor alluded in his remarks, in appropriate terms, to the valuable services of Mr. Dixwell, and the loss sustained by his resignation, to which he made a very brief reply. Since the Exhibition, thirteen of the first class have entered Harvard College, and eleven have entered other Colleges; and four do not intend to enter any College at present. As evidence of the thorough manner in which they were prepared for College, it may be stated that a majority of those who entered the Freshman Class at Cambridge without being conditioned, and thus required to be examined again, were from the Boston Latin School; and such is understood to have been the fact for some years past.

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THE BEST IS THE CHEAPEST.

Now I think it will not cost much pains to show the great importance of giving a child the earliest tincture of whatever is most excellent in its kind.—*Quintilian*.



## DISCIPLINE OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

LIBERAL principles and popular principles are by no means necessarily the same: and it is of importance to be aware of the difference between them. Popular principles are opposed simply to restraint; liberal principles, to unjust restraint. Popular principles sympathize with all who are subject to authority, and regard with suspicion all punishments; liberal principles sympathize, on the other hand, with authority, whenever the evil tendencies of human nature are more likely to be shown in disregarding it than abusing it. Popular principles seem to have but one object—the deliverance of the many from the control of the few. Liberal principles, while generally favorable to this same object, yet pursue it as a means, not as an end; and therefore they support the subjection of the many to the few, under certain circumstances, when the great end which they steadily keep in view, is more likely to be promoted by subjection than by independence. For the great end of liberal principles is indeed “the greatest happiness of the greatest number” if we understand that the happiness of man consists more in his intellectual well-doing than in his physical; and yet more in his moral and religious excellence than in his intellectual.

It must be allowed, however, that the fault of popular principles, as distinguished from liberal, has been greatly provoked by the long-continued prevalence of principles of authority which are no less illiberal. Power has been so constantly perverted that it has come to be generally suspected. Liberty has been so constantly unjustly restrained, that it has been thought impossible that it should ever be indulged too freely. Popular feeling is not quick in observing the change of times and circumstances: it is with difficulty brought to act on a long-standing evil; but, being once set in motion, it is apt to overshoot its mark and continue to cry out against an evil long after it has disappeared and the opposite evil is become most to be dreaded. Something of this excessive recoil of feeling may be observed, I think, in the continued cry against the severity of the penal code, as distinguished from its other defects; and the same disposition is shown in the popular clamor against military flogging, and in the complaints which are often made against the existing system of discipline in our schools.

“Corporal punishment” it is said, “is degrading.” I well know of what feeling this is the expression; it originates in that proud notion of personal independence which is neither reasonable nor Christian, but essentially barbarian. It visited Europe in former times with all the curses of the age of chivalry, and

is threatening us now with those of Jacobinism. For so it is, that the evils of ultra-aristocracy and ultra-popular principles spring from precisely the same source—namely, from selfish pride—from an idolatry of personal honor and dignity in the aristocratical form of the disease—of personal independence in its modern and popular form. It is simply impatience of inferiority and submission—a feeling which must be more frequently wrong or right, in proportion to the relative situation and worthiness of him who entertains it, but which cannot be always or generally right except in beings infinitely more perfect than man. Impatience of inferiority felt by a child towards his parents, or by a pupil towards his instructors, is morally wrong, because it is at variance with the truth; there exists a real inferiority in the relation, and it is an error, a fault, a corruption of nature, not to acknowledge it.

Punishment, then, inflicted by a parent or a master for the purposes of correction, is in no true sense of the word degrading; nor is it the more degrading for being corporal. To say that corporal punishment is an appeal to personal fear is a mere abuse of the terms. In this sense all bodily pain or inconvenience is an appeal to personal fear; and a man should be ashamed to take any pains to avoid the toothache or the gout. Pain is an evil; and the fear of pain, like all other natural feelings, is of a mixed character, sometimes useful and becoming, sometimes wrong and mischievous. I believe that we should not do well to extirpate any of these feelings, but to regulate and check them by cherishing and strengthening such as are purely good. To destroy the fear of pain altogether, even if practicable, would be but a doubtful good, until the better elements of our nature were so perfected as wholly to supersede its use. Perfect love of good is the only thing which can profitably cast out all fear. In the mean while, what is the course of true wisdom? Not to make a boy insensible to bodily pain, but to make him dread moral evil more; so that fear will do its proper and appointed work, without so going beyond it as to become cowardice. It is cowardice to fear pain or danger more than neglect of duty, or than the commission of evil; but it is useful to fear them, when they are but the accompaniments or the consequences of folly and of faults.

It is very true that the fear of punishment generally (for surely it makes no difference whether it be the fear of the personal pain of flogging, or of the personal inconvenience of what have been proposed as its substitutes, confinements, and a reduced allowance of food,) is not the highest motive of action; and therefore the course actually followed in education is most agreeable to nature and reason that the fear of punishment should be appealed to less and less as the moral principle becomes stronger with advancing age.

If any one really supposes that young men in the higher forms of public schools are governed by fear, and not by moral motives ; that the appeal is not habitually made to the highest and noblest principles and feelings of their nature, he is too little aware of the actual state of those institutions to be properly qualified to speak or write about them.

With regard to the highest classes, indeed, it is well known that corporal punishment is as totally out of the question in the practice of our schools as it is at the universities ; and I believe that there could nowhere be found a set of young men amongst whom punishment of any kind was less frequent, or by whom it was less required. The real point to be considered, is merely, whether corporal punishment is in all cases unfit to be inflicted on boys under fifteen, or on those who, being older in years, are not proportionably advanced in understanding or in character, who must be ranked in the lower part of the school, and who are little alive to the feeling of self-respect, and little capable of being influenced by moral motives. Now, with regard to young boys, it appears to me positively mischievous to accustom them to consider themselves insulted or degraded by personal correction. The fruits of such a system were well shown in an incident which occurred in Paris during the three days of the revolution of 1830. A boy twelve years old, who had been forward in insulting the officers, was noticed by one of the officers ; and though the action was then raging, the officer, considering the age of the boy, merely struck him with the flat part of his sword, as the fit chastisement for boyish impertinence. But the boy had been taught to consider his person sacred, and that a blow was a deadly insult ; he therefore followed the officer, and having watched his opportunity, took deliberate aim at him with a pistol, and murdered him. This was the true spirit of the savage, exactly like that of Callum Beg in Waverley, who, when a "decent gentleman" was going to chastise him with his cane, for throwing a quoit at his shins, instantly drew a pistol to vindicate the dignity of his shoulders. We laugh at such a trait in the work of the great novelist, because, according to our own notions, the absurdity of Callum Beg's resentment is even more striking than his atrocity. But I doubt whether to the French readers of Waverley it has appeared either laughable or disgusting ; at least the similar action of the real Callum in the streets of Paris was noticed at the time as something entitled to our admiration. And yet what can be more mischievous than thus to anticipate in boyhood those feelings which even in manhood are of a most questionable nature, but which at an earlier period are wholly and clearly evil ? At an age when it is almost impossible to find a true, manly sense of the degradation of guilt or faults, where is the wisdom of

encouraging a fantastic sense of the degradation of personal correction? What can be more false, or more adverse to the simplicity, sobriety, and humbleness of mind which are the best ornaments of youth, and offer the best promise of a noble manhood? There is an essential inferiority in a boy as compared with a man, which makes an assumption of equality on his part at once ridiculous and wrong; and where there is no equality, the exercise of superiority implied in personal chastisement cannot in itself be an insult or a degradation.

The total abandonment, then, of corporal punishments for the faults of young boys, appears to me not only uncalled for, but absolutely to be deprecated. It is of course most desirable that all punishment should be superseded by the force of moral motives; and up to a certain point this is practicable. All endeavors so to dispense with flogging are the wisdom and duty of the schoolmaster; and by these means the amount of corporal punishment inflicted may be, and in fact has been, in more than one instance, reduced to something very inconsiderable. But it is one thing to get rid of punishment by lessening the amount of faults, and another to say, that even if the faults are committed, the punishment ought not to be inflicted.

Now it is folly to expect that faults will never occur; and it is very essential towards impressing on a boy's mind the natural imperfectness and subordination of his condition, that his faults and the state of his character being different from what they are in after life, so the nature of his punishment should be different also, lest by any means he should unite the pride and self-importance of manhood with a boy's moral carelessness and low notions of moral responsibility. The beau ideal of school discipline with regard to young boys would appear to be this—that whilst corporal punishment was retained on principle as fitly answering to, and marking the natural inferior state of boyhood, morally and intellectually, and therefore as conveying no peculiar degradation to persons in such a state, we should cherish and encourage to the utmost all attempts made by the several boys as individuals to escape from the natural punishment of their age by rising above its naturally low tone of principle. While we told them that, as being boys, they were not degraded by being punished as boys, we should tell them also, that in proportion as we saw them trying to anticipate their age morally, so we should delight to anticipate it also in our treatment of them personally—that every approach to the steadiness of principle shown in manhood should be considered as giving a claim to the respectability of manhood—that we should be delighted to forget the inferiority of their age, as they labored to lessen their moral and intellectual inferiority. This would be a discipline truly generous and wise—in one word, truly Chris-



tian ; making an increase of dignity the certain consequence of increased virtuous effort, but giving no countenance to that barbarian pride which claims the treatment of a freeman and an equal, while it cherishes all the carelessness, the folly, and the low and selfish principle of a slave.

With regard to older boys, indeed, who yet have not attained that rank in the school which exempts them from corporal punishment, the question is one of greater difficulty. In this case the obvious objections to such a punishment are serious ; and the truth is, that if a boy above fifteen is of such character as to require flogging, the essentially trifling nature of school correction is inadequate to the offence. But in fact boys, after a certain age, who cannot keep their rank in school ought not to be retained at it ; and if they do stay, the question becomes only a choice of evils. For the standard of attainment at a large school being necessarily adapted for no more than the average rate of capacity, a boy who, after fifteen, continues to fall below it, is either intellectually incapable of deriving benefit from the system of the place, or morally indisposed to do so ; and in either case he ought to be removed from it. And as the growth of the body is often exceedingly vigorous where that of the mind is slow, such boys are at once apt for many kinds of evil, and hard to be governed by moral motives, while they have outgrown the fear of school correction. These are fit subjects for private tuition, where the moral and domestic influences may be exercised upon them more constantly and personally than is compatible with the numbers of a large school. Meanwhile such boys, in fact, often continue to be kept at school by their parents, who would regard it as an inconvenience to be required to withdraw them. Now it is superfluous to say, that in these cases corporal punishment should be avoided whenever it is possible ; and perhaps it would be best, if for such grave offences as would fitly call for it in younger boys, older boys, whose rank in the school renders them equally subject to it, were at once to be punished by expulsion. As it is, the long-continued use of personal correction as a proper school punishment renders it possible to offer the alternative of flogging to an older boy, without subjecting him to any excessive degradation, and his submission to it marks appropriately the greatness and disgraceful character of his offence, while it establishes, at the same time, the important principle, that as long as a boy remains at school, the respectability and immunities of manhood must be earned by manly conduct and a manly sense of duty.

It seems to me, then, that the complaints commonly brought against our system of school discipline are wrong either in their principle or as to the truth of the fact. The complaint against all corporal punishments as degrading and improper, goes, I

think, upon a false and mischievous principle: the complaint against governing boys by fear, and mere authority, without any appeal to their moral feelings, is perfectly just in the abstract, but perfectly inapplicable to the actual state of established schools.—*Dr. Arnold.*

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### PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF THE CITY OF CLEVELAND.

WE have read the Report of the Acting Manager, George Willey, with great satisfaction. It is a model report. Cleveland may safely challenge any town or city throughout the land to a comparison of reports for the last three years. Mr. Willey's views on the subject of popular education, are eminently sound and practical, and they are expressed in a luminous, manly, and vigorous style. He does not multiply words to swell the bulk of a pamphlet, but he seems to write because he has something to say, and what he says is strongly impregnated with the essence of common sense. When we read his reports, we could but wish that they might be put into the hands of every supervisor of schools throughout the land.

He is a strong advocate of the *Gradation System*, the intrinsic superiority of which Dr. Sears so successfully demonstrated in his last Annual Report.

This system is carried to a great degree of perfection in Cleveland, and its results are highly satisfactory.

The following outline of the system as it exists in that city is taken from the Report for 1851.

“Our system of Public Schools consists of four Departments; the Primary, Intermediate, Senior, and Central High.

In the Primary Department there are ten schools, ten teachers, and 837 scholars; in the Intermediate, eight schools, eight teachers, and 680 scholars; in the Senior, six schools, twelve teachers, and 697 scholars; in the Central High School, two teachers, and ninety scholars. This is the approved American system of Graded Free Schools, which has found, or is finding favor in every section of the country. The least reflection upon it, or observation of its workings, unfolds its harmony, efficiency, and beauty.

Its contour is pyramidal, having its base at the Primary Department, with the greatest number of schools, teachers, and scholars. Here are taught the rudiments—the Alphabet, Reading and Orthography, and the simpler exercises in Numbers, Linear Drawing, and Vocal Music.

The next Department is the Intermediate or Junior. Here, besides the studies of the Primary Department, are assigned additional ones, such as Intellectual Arithmetic, Natural History, Geography, and Penmanship. In these a certain stage of proficiency is reached, preparatory to advancement to the senior schools.

The Senior Department, again, is more limited in dimensions, but

is still higher up in position and attainment. Here the studies of the lower Departments are perfected, while additional branches, suited to the maturity and better scholarship of the pupils, are introduced; such as Written Arithmetic, American History, Grammar and Composition, Intellectual Algebra, and Physiology. Music, under the guidance of professional teachers, begins to be taught as a science. Drawing passes from mere Linear to Perspective. Penmanship assumes more freedom and exactness. Higher Geography is linked to History, and is taught on a more expanded and critical plan.

To carry out our figure of the pyramid, we would say, that the apex, the crowning feature of our system, least in magnitude, yet surmounting all, is the Central High School. Here, under learned and experienced teachers, Public School Education is completed. While the leading studies of the Senior Schools pass under review, or are examined in more profound, or elaborate treatises, all the higher English branches, the Higher Mathematics, the Natural Sciences, Bookkeeping, Rhetoric, Mental Philosophy, and a wider range of Historical Reading, are pursued. Here all means are resorted to, to finally discipline, enrich and adorn the mind, preparatory to its relinquishment of the pursuits of students, for an immediate launch into the sea of life."

It has been the good fortune of this school, since its organization in 1845, to be under the superintendence of Andrew Freese, Esq., a gentleman who to superior natural endowments for the profession of teaching, has added high scientific attainments and a large experience. Through his exertions, an association of the teachers of the city has been formed, and for three years it has held one meeting each week, for purposes of mutual instruction in the business of teaching. The average attendance of the teachers at these meetings has been seventy-five per cent. Here is an example worthy of imitation by the teachers of other cities.

J. D. P.

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[We are happy to find it in our power to redeem the promise we made to our readers some time since, to present them with some of the good things contained in the recent report of the Superintendent of the Common Schools of Connecticut. The subjoined article purports to be an outline of the principles and trains of thought, presented and illustrated at a Teachers' Institute, held at Wolcottville, Conn., and was drawn up by Rev. T. K. Beecher. It is a treasure of wisdom, and may be read and re-read with profit by teachers who have had experience, as well as by those who are just entering upon the duties of the profession. But it needs no commendation from us. It will speak for itself.—J. D. P.]

### OUTLINE OF SUBJECTS AND EXERCISES.

THE spirit of the request, made by the members of the Institute, that an outline of the proceedings be printed, for future reference, demands that the matters be arranged topically,

rather than according to the accidental order in which they were discussed.

It should be borne in mind, that the following pages are not offered as a treatise upon teaching. They are prepared for the use of those teachers who were present as members of the Institute, and are designed to preserve in a condensed form, principles and trains of thought, which were there presented and fully illustrated.

Among the most important of these principles, the following were stated as fundamental and properly introductory.

Knowledge being of two kinds : *arbitrary*, as names, use of words, notation, dates, &c., and *inferential*, as the successive unfoldings of any pure science, it follows :

I. Absolute or arbitrary facts should be freely and frequently *told* to the scholar, as arbitrary, and therefore to be learned without question or attempt to reason.

II. Inferred facts and principles deducible from previous knowledge, should be taught with and by their connections and in their various relations. They should spring up in the mind of the learner, and not be merely transplanted thither from a book or a teacher's mind.

Again : the mind of childhood is living and active, possessing its likes and dislikes, its hungerings and its loathings. Teaching is truly a feeding of the mind. Hence :

III. The attempt to teach without first exciting, or at least seeking for an appetite on the part of the learner, is unwise, and in most cases ensures its own defeat.

Again : Since we recognize in every child a triple organization, embracing the physical, the intellectual and the moral natures ; and since *true* education covers all three departments ; hence :

IV. To cultivate any one part or power of childhood, at the expense or to the neglect of other parts of his nature, causes oftentimes entire failure, and always more or less distortion and want of symmetry.

Again : Studies are oftentimes of value to the learner in more than one particular. Always there may be gained (1.) a discipline of mind, and (2.) an increase of knowledge. Besides these two, there are points of morals, of religion, &c., which are more or less incident to every properly taught school study. Hence :

V. Studies should be selected and instruction imparted with reference to securing the greatest comprehensiveness of result and consequent improvement from the pursuit.

The school is designed to qualify youth for active and useful lives in a republican state and under free institutions, free almost to license. Hence :



VI. The School should be made to exemplify the excellence of the social and political organization, under which the scholars are soon to find themselves.

Again: Since parents are primarily entrusted with the whole care and responsibility incident to the education of childhood and cannot without great wrong lay it *wholly* aside, it follows that:

VII. Teachers should hold themselves auxiliary to parents, and not as an independent power or authority.

These fundamental principles when applied in detail, work very remarkable changes in the methods to be used by a teacher. Are these principles true?

For the sake of clearness, the following illustrations are arranged, not in the order in which they came up for discussion in the Institute, but by subjects, viz.:

1st. LANGUAGE, (1. Talking and the Alphabet; 2. Spelling and Reading; 3. Grammar; 4. Analysis and Composition.)

2d. ARITHMETIC AND MATHEMATICAL INSTRUCTION.

3d. GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY.

4th. PENMANSHIP AND DRAWING.

5th. ARTICULATION, VOCAL EXERCISES, AND SINGING.

6th. DISCIPLINE, (Order of exercises and school government.)

7th. MUTUAL RELATION OF PARTIES IN A SCHOOL, viz.: parents, teachers, scholars, school officers, and the public in general.

8th. SELECTION OF STUDIES, BOOKS, ETC.

9th. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION.

#### 1st. LANGUAGE—"Talking and the Alphabet."

Very much is implied under this brief heading. Language is, strictly speaking, but the instrument with which all other knowledge makes itself active, useful, and impartible. Yet in school, it must be pursued as an *end*, a special object of pursuit; and while this is true, it is equally true, that in school, language should be taught as it is to be used hereafter, i. e., as the medium for all thought. Hence:

1. *Every study and every recitation should have a language-training element, fully developed and recognized.*

"I know but can't think," "I know but can't tell," are frequent answers in all schools. They both imply, whenever heard, that the language element is wanting in that particular study. It is not enough to have a child learn Arithmetic or Geography; he needs also to *talk* Arithmetic and *talk* Geography. It is always easier to teach a child "to cipher," than 'tis to teach him to explain *fluently* and *gracefully*. There is an arithme-

tic of the head, one of the fingers, and one of the tongue. Usually we find but one of these taught, viz. : ciphering, or " of the fingers."

Again: Language begins with mere imitation and submissive adoption of arbitrary sounds, heard by the child and remembered. Hence :

2. At the very outset of *school* instruction, we should draw our method of teaching these purely *arbitrary things*, names, &c., from the practice which prevails in every home, where a child learns to talk, nominally without teaching, really with the only *true* teaching—pleasant talk.

We cannot excite an appetite directly in very young children, for the alphabet and print. We have all of us violated, time and again, our third principle. The idle, vacant faces, the restless mischief, or the happy sleep of nine-tenths of the A-B-C scholars in our schools, should teach us that we are often premature in our alphabetic lessons. True, children are sent to school too early in life. But when we find them with us, we should aim to make them a home *at* school, since we cannot get them home *from* school.

There are many lessons to be learned by little children, before they learn the alphabet. A little class sent out to *see* and called in to recite what they have seen, are in a fair way to learn to *talk*, and talking should be taught before reading. Children do not know how to use *intelligently* any one of their five senses. We can create an appetite to use the eye and ear and hand, we can teach to *observe*, we can teach the names of things and scenes observed, long before we can properly teach the convenient art of reading and writing.

When a class has *observed* and recited a week or month, it will soon be found by them, that memory is treacherous and lets slip much they have seen and which they wished to recite. An older scholar accompanies them and makes a memorandum and *reads* fluently item after item, which they, alas, forgot. The *use* of writing and of print thus becomes obvious to the little class ; an appetite begins to awaken within, and by a judicious intermingling of eye and hand lessons with the dry tasks of letters and of words, this appetite may be increased, so that the A-B-C class may become as busy and as happy at school, as such children always are at home.

It should be observed here, that the motive for every study should be drawn, *not* from queer devices and toys, which *always* overlie the thing learned so heavily as to conceal it, but from an intelligent exhibition of the actual value of the thing to be learned. Sauces may tempt an invalid to eat—but he eats *not the bread*, but the sauce. Hunger makes an oat-cake sweet.

" But the sounds of letters and the spelling of words are so

abominably irregular, that after all, there must be a long term of years spent in learning their *arbitrary* use; and after all, there's no royal road to reading!" True: therefore,

3. Whatever of regularity and law there is, should be carefully selected and taught. The alphabet is a jungle, dense and dark; but it has great landmarks nevertheless: and in learning to read there is much room for inference and constructive skill.

Children may be found reciting, "A's a *harrow*," "B's an *ox-yoke*," "C's a *pail-handle*," &c., who know not any of these valuable articles by sight, and have learned the "*harrow*" and "*ox-yoke*" just as blindly as they learned the "A" and the "B." To learn the alphabet thus, is no gain whatsoever. True, the *names* are learned, but we never use the *names* of consonants—we use only their powers. Hence:

1. Consonants should be learned by their powers, and not by their names.

But having taught one *long* sound to each vowel, viz.: a, e, i, o, and u, and having learned the powers of the consonants, it is time to give the little laborers a taste of their harvest. Words on a blackboard, using these *known* sounds, should be read, copied, and written by the scholar. G O T (goat) B A T (bait) &c., always a familiar word, spelled *phonetically*, that is, by its *sound*. For,

2. Spelling words, English words, is one thing, and spelling sounds is quite another. And

3. Learning to read and write is quite a distinct labor from learning to read and write *English*; as is fully evidenced by the boy who wrote "&ru Jaxn."

Having thus taught one power, and only one, for each letter, and exercised the class for a week or more on phonetic spelling with these slender materials, the class themselves will find many familiar words, which they can speak, but cannot write.

4. Reading and writing advance side by side; they are both of them, *language*, the former using the eye and the tongue, the latter the eye and hand.

Selecting from these familiar words a set that contain the short sound of each vowel—as *kat*, *set*, *bit*, *log*, *bug*, &c.; a word of instruction tells the class, that these letters stand for two sounds, and we have to *guess* by the *sense* which is meant. "Does *kat* spell cat or Cate?" Ans. "It spells both." "Well. 'The cat or Cate catches mice;' in that sentence which does *kat* spell?" Ans. "Cat." "How do you know?" Ans. "By the sense," &c.

And so progressively the class advances until it has learned for A four sounds; for E two; for I two; for O three; for U three; and for the very few ambiguous consonants, which have no other letter to express their anomalous use, their double or triple power.

The class are now *phonetic* writers and spellers; and the record of phonetic triumphs in England, shows how brief a time is needed to teach thus far; while the bright intelligence and cheerfulness of a class under such training, would make the longest road seem "the shortest way home."

Let it be observed here, that the class have learned to *talk* well what they know, have learned to use their senses for observation, and can now write or print whatever they can speak.

5. *Phonetic* spellers and readers are shrewd *guessers* at the meaning of a word when disguised by English spelling. They are far abler to read, than any ordinary A-B-C conqueror is, to make out of "be a ka e ar," the simple word *baker*.

Now, and not until now, begins the necessity of giving the learner a book—a *Reader*.

The necessary limits within which this outline must be confined, will not allow so full illustration of the remaining principles discussed under the head "Language." Enough has been given to show the application of several of our introductory principles to this exceedingly elementary department of a teacher's duty.

Thus far we have taught the child to talk, and faithfully to draw, as it were, the pictures of the sounds it utters. Now comes the labor of teaching the child to recognize, in the caricatures which we call words, the same sounds which it has learned to pronounce and write. In other words, we have treated of "talking" and the "alphabet," and have now come to "spelling" and "reading."

#### 1st. (contin.) LANGUAGE.—"*Spelling and Reading.*"

We have said already, that "to spell words is one thing, and to spell sounds quite another." In teaching, the two should be kept separate. Hence:

1. we need orthoëpic classes as well as orthographic ones. The former train the organs of speech, the latter train the eye and the hand.

In business, we never detect a man's faulty spelling until he is called upon to *write*. In actual life we are never called upon to spell a word *orally*. The most accurate proof readers will often fail in *oral* spelling. The most thoroughly drilled spelling classes *invariably* fail in written accuracy. Hence:

2. Spelling is an art learned by the *eye* for the guidance of the hand in writing. The *tongue* is idle when we write, and it is folly to train *in school* the tongue to do what it never needs do again. *Spelling should be taught by writing*. Again,

If a man spells faultily thus "beleif" "recieve" "comon" "pursuade" "persue," &c., it does him but little good to be able to spell "phthysic" and "chevaux-de-frise" and "rendez-vous" correctly. Hence:



3. We should teach ordinary spelling thoroughly ere we look up "puzzlers." Again :

In the various languages used by men, there are many valuable words, whose orthography we ought to know ; but it is folly in the extreme to commit to memory a Latin Lexicon, without once looking at the significancy of the words we spell. Equal folly is it for us to teach "perplexity" "reciprocity" "fatuity" "onerous," &c. ; for, to childhood, these words are mere Greek. Hence :

4. Definition and use of words should go hand in hand with their correct spelling. Again :

In actual life, we never spell words for the sake of the *spelling merely*. We spell only when we wish to write ; and then we use all sorts of words. Hence :

5. We need no *spelling* classes *distinctively* ; but *all* our studies and *all* our classes ought to be " *talking, reading, writing and spelling* classes. Arithmetic ought, Geography ought, EVERY RECITATION ought to exercise the class in these four arts, which, in life's labor, are never practised ALONE, but always in connection with some business or labor other than the mere reading, writing, &c., &c.

In support of this last and most important injunction, the following are alleged as facts, and every teacher is competent to decide whether they are facts or mere fancy,—viz. : Large classes often spell well with the tongue, but miserably with the pen. Scholars often write beautifully in their copy-books, but abominably when called upon to write a letter, &c. Scholars often can spell a spelling-book straight through, who cannot *use* one in ten of the words they spell. Classes will often *recite* well, who yet cannot write out the very words they repeated a moment before. Boys frequently read a lesson fluently, and yet cannot tell a single idea that is conveyed by their lesson. A teacher may, very often, by reading from a scholar's book, adding never a word, explain a dark puzzle, which the learner never dreamed was elucidated in the book, &c., &c.

Are any or all of the above assertions facts ? If they are, they assuredly point clearly the road to improved teaching.

By "reading" is generally meant, the mere learning to articulate, inflect, &c. Of these exercises mention will be made under the head devoted to their consideration.

Let it be borne in mind that we are not aiming to set forth labor-saving methods ; so far as teachers' labor is in question, we are fourfolding it in intensity, even while we shorten it in duration. Young children have a shamefully *dull time* of it, learning to read ; and our hope and aim is to suggest alleviations of this stupid *slavery* to the alphabet and spelling book, which renders our *little* boys and girls such living testimony against our professional skill. But to return to "Reading."

In actual life we read for our own information ; we read for the sake of catching the sentiment we read. Hence,

1. It is far more important (and far more difficult) to teach classes to read understandingly, than it is to render them skilful pronouncers of words. "I had rather speak five words with my understanding \* \* \* than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue," says the teacher Paul. Yet nine-tenths of the children in this State, merely to gratify a longing after *big leather-covered reading books*, do stammeringly read "ten thousand words in an unknown tongue," and too many teachers never dream of asking, "understandest thou what thou redest?"

2. Every word of every reading lesson should be thoroughly understood ere the lesson is connectedly read.

3. For young classes, the teacher ought carefully to explain and familiarly paraphrase every reading lesson, and (as an exercise in writing and spelling) require an accurate transcription of, at least, a paragraph or two, as the regular preparation for the recitation.

4. More advanced classes should make this paraphrase for themselves, and write it out fairly, learning to use their dictionary as the companion of *all* their studies.

5. The mechanical training of the vocal organs should not be based upon the reading lesson, but should stand by itself as a *mechanical* exercise.

6. *All* the lessons of school should be treated as reading lessons, and be carefully read aloud by the class ere they be given up for recitation.

It must be borne in mind that we define reading, as a branch of school training, thus: Reading is the art of understanding the thoughts of others when they address the eye either in script or print. Vocal excellence is quite a different attainment.

Our schools too often teach the voice to read, and let the understanding go uncultivated, in this exercise.

#### 1st (contin.) LANGUAGE.—"*English Grammar.*"

There is usually a prejudice existing in the minds of parents and children against the thorough pursuit of this department of language. This prejudice is well founded if the study be pursued by the book, and accomplished in the same way that tables of weight and measure are mastered. Equal folly is it to attempt to teach a child the "art of speaking and reading and writing" his vernacular language, by the use of a grammar one hour a day, if he listens to and uses faulty forms of speech all the rest of his time.

1. Having learned *by use* one language fluently, and then studied the laws of its formation and construction, we are then able, in learning a second language, to derive aid from its grammar. In our schools, where, as yet, the English language is

imperfectly used, it is of but little value to the learner to know, that "a verb must agree with its subject in number and person," or that "I, my or mine, me," are the three cases of the 1st Personal Pronoun; of little value, that is, in the matter of learning to speak and write correctly the language. We use language in unconsciousness of its laws. We use it just as we breathe, without pausing to ask what muscles shall act and what rest inactive. Hence:

2. The study of English grammar should never be allowed to outstrip the child's ability to use the language correctly, but should be pursued, as an exercise teaching the child to classify *familiar* words, pointing out their syntax, and ascertaining their precise power and office in a sentence. For,

3. English grammar affords the simplest and most truly progressive exercises in generalization and abstract thought, that can be devised for childhood. This is the true value of the study. As ordinarily pursued it is valueless.\*

A book usually makes a scholar deem the lesson one to be merely memorized; a memorized lesson from a grammar is invariably useless, nay injurious. Hence:

4. A teacher should have half a dozen grammars for his own use, but should teach his classes, particularly his younger classes, *orally* or by blackboard; and the class should study grammar from the reading book and from original sentences, using slate and pencil for every lesson.

Parsing, when confined to an *oral* exercise, is rarely studied by a class before the recitation hour. It usually degenerates into a mere repetition of certain gibberish, learned by constant exercise and repeated by rote. Hence:

5. Exercises in parsing should be continually varied, so as to exclude any mechanical habit. *Written forms of synoptic parsing* should be required frequently; and the phraseology of recitation should vary from week to week.†

\* See Smith's, Greene's, Wells's, and Weld's Grammars; seeking not for specimens of critical skill, but for exercises of simple beauty for young classes.

† *Synoptic Parsing* is used for the sake of condensing much matter into small space, in many grammars. As an important aid in study, or as lightening a teacher's labor in school, we do not often find it. A specimen is subjoined of written parsing, as applied to nouns and verbs. A glance from a practical teacher will detect errors in exercises thus arranged, while hours of labor, without this condensation on the part of the scholar, will hardly suffice to correct seven or eight exercises.

EXERCISE. Sentence.—Little children, love one another.

Syntax.	Children love.	Syntax.	Children, love or love
Pt. of Sp.	Noun.	Pr. or Sp.	Verb. [ye.
Class.	Common.	Class by form.	Regular.
Gender.	Common.	Class by mean'g.	Transitive.
Number.	Plural.	Voice.	Active.
Person.	Second.	Mood.	Imperative.
Case.	Nom. or Indp. stt.	Tense.	Present.
Rule illustrated.	"The subject of a finite verb is always in the Nom. Case," or "The name of a person or thing addressed," &c.	Person.	Second.
		Number.	Plural.
		Agreement.	Children or ye.
		Rule illustrated.	"A finite verb must agree with the meaning of its subject in number and person."

In the study of a language there are two main divisions. (1.) Its logical force or meaning, and, (2.) its grammatical laws or mechanical construction. We have alluded to exercises in paraphrase as important preparation for a reading lesson. This exercise takes hold of the logical department. As a final and *test* exercise, by which to prove the attainment of a class in the technical or mechanical mastery of language, the following is offered.

6. Grammatical paraphrase is an exercise perhaps the most compendious and difficult that can be devised for this branch of study. By it is meant, the production of two sentences or paragraphs, whose *sense* shall be diverse, but whose syntax and grammatical quality—i. e., whose *parsing* shall be absolutely identical. A short specimen is subjoined.

Sentence. "Wit *is* to life, *what* bells *are* to horses, not expected to draw *the* load, but only to jingle while the horses draw."

Paraphrase. Rest *is* for labor, *what* ebb-tides *are* for floods, never intended to rule *the* ocean, nor even to last till the waves return. This paraphrase is faulty intentionally, in the words "ebb tides," (compound) "bells," (simple); "horses," (com. gend.) "floods," (neut. gend.); "last," (neuter); "jingle," (active); "waves," "horses"; "return," (regular); "draw," (irregular.) A *perfect* paraphrase of this sentence is possible, except of the words in Italics, which have no grammatical equivalents in our language; let teachers test the difficulty of this exercise by trying this sentence.

7. An appetite, a motive for this study must be sought for, from the love which all minds have to do original thinking. Experimentally it has been found the most intensely fascinating study which can be offered to a learner. That English grammar is *usually* interesting or useful in our schools as they are, cannot be truly affirmed. The fault is not in the study, but in the incapacity of the teacher.

#### THE NORFOLK COUNTY TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION,

At their last meeting, passed a vote offering a prize of Ten Dollars to the Lady Teachers of the Association, for the best Essay on any subject connected with the duties of their profession.

The Essays should be sent to the President, Thomas Barrows, Esq., of Dorchester Upper Mills, or to the Secretary of the Association, over a fictitious signature, accompanied by a sealed envelope containing the real name of the Author.

DEDHAM, Nov. 1st, 1851.

CHAS. J. CAFEN,  
Sec. N. T. A.

#### THE MASSACHUSETTS STATE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

Will hold its next annual meeting in Fitchburg. The Session will commence on the evening of Monday the 25th inst., and will continue through the succeeding day and evening. Lectures will be delivered by Professor Louis Agassiz, Cambridge; D. B. Hagar, Esq., Roxbury; Eben S. Stearns, Esq., West Newton; and Daniel Mansfield, Esq., Cambridge.

Teachers and friends of Education are cordially invited to attend the meeting.

THOMAS SHERWIN,  
PRESIDENT.